

Baby Safety

September is Baby Safety Month



Many babies die or are injured each year due to unsafe cribs, high chairs and other equipment. Many succumb to assorted other unsafe conditions in the home. As often as not, the cause is lack of education or caution, rather than blatant neglect.

These sobering statistics should give parents cause for concern, and extra vigilance.

BEDROOM

Cribs:

~ No soft bedding under baby

Up to 1,800 babies per year may have suffocated on soft bedding due to rebreathing.



~ Sturdy crib with no missing hardware

There are about 50 deaths each year; 32% occur when side or end of crib separated from crib structure - often from missing or loose hardware; 14% are due to entrapment between mattress and crib side; 11% are due to entrapment from failure of crib support; 6% are due to entanglement of clothing or other item; 6% due to entrapment in crib slats; 31% are due to miscellaneous other causes.



Window Cords:

~ Keep well out of baby's reach

There were 173 deaths between 1981 and September 1995.



BATHROOM

Child-Resistant Closures:

~ Keep well out of baby's reach

Since 1992 there have been 42 deaths of children under age 5 from medicines or household chemicals.

Bath Water Temperature:

~ Check it!!!

There about 34 deaths and 3,800 burn injuries each year.



Drownings in Tubs, Toilets, etc.:

~ NEVER leave small children unattended

As part of Baby Safety Month, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is warning parents and caregivers about in-home drowning hazards. "Summer is over and many pools are now closed, but drowning dangers never end," said CPSC Chairman Hal Stratton. "Parents of young children need to know there are other drowning hazards in and around the home."

An average of about 240 children under 5 years old drown in swimming pools nationwide each year. But CPSC also has reports of about **110 children under 5** who have drowned in other products in and around the home each year. These products include bathtubs, hot tubs, spas, buckets and other containers.



More children drown in bathtubs than in any other product in the home. In 2001 (the most recent year of complete data), CPSC reported 72 children under 5 who drowned in bathtubs, and more than half were under 1 year old. Most cases involved a child left unattended in the tub.

In several of the bathtub incidents, children were left to play in a tub with the water running and the drain left open. The parent or caregiver assumed the open drain would prevent the bathtub from filling up and left the bathroom. When they returned, the drain was closed or clogged, the water had filled the bathtub, and the child was submerged.



CPSC is aware of 13 children under 5 who died in spas or hot tubs in 2001, 11 deaths involving 5-gallon buckets, seven involving other- sized buckets, five deaths in wading pools, four deaths in landscape ponds and one death in a plastic basin.

“Man-made landscape ponds seem to be getting more popular with gardeners now, and since they frequently include fish and fountains, they are sure to attract toddlers,” Stratton said. “They often are installed with no barriers to prevent access.”

Home Drowning Prevention Tips include:

- Young children can drown in even small amounts of water. Never leave young children alone near any water.
- Always keep a baby within arm’s reach in a bathtub. Never leave to answer the phone, answer the door, get a towel or for any other reason. If you must leave, take the baby with you.
- Don’t leave a baby or toddler in a bathtub under the care of another young child.
- A baby bath seat is not a substitute for supervision. A bath seat is a bathing aid, not a safety device. Babies can slip or climb out of bath seats and drown.



- Keep toilet lids down to prevent access to water. Consider using toilet clips to stop young children from opening the lids.
- Consider keeping children out of bathrooms by using bathroom door latches that are out of reach of young children.
- Never leave a bucket containing even a small amount of liquid unattended. After using a bucket, always empty and store it where young children cannot reach it. Buckets left outside can collect rainwater and are a hazard.



Spring Loaded Seat Lock

- Toddlers can fall headfirst into 4- and 5-gallon buckets and drown.
- To prevent children from gaining access to spas or hot tubs when not in use, always secure safety covers and barriers. Non-rigid covers (such as solar covers) can appear to be in place even after children slip underneath them into the water.
- Learn CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation). It can be a lifesaver when seconds count.

KITCHEN

High Chairs:

~ **Strap in, never leave unattended**

Burns from Stoves:

An estimated 9,500 injuries to children under age 5 were treated in U.S. hospital emergency rooms in 1994. Average annual deaths between 1988 and 1992 was 4. Annually there are about 22,000 thermal burn injuries involving stoves, about one third to children. In 1992 there were 220 range/oven fire deaths and 4,670 injuries.



Cleaning Products, Medicines, Knives, Matches, Plastic Bags:

~ **Keep safely out of reach of small children**

- Knives - in 1993 there were 16,000 injuries to children under age 5;
- Plastic Bags - from 1980 through 1987 there were about 15 suffocation deaths each year to children under age 5;
- Matches - In 1992 there were about 10,200 fires, 120 fire deaths, and 870 fire injuries from children playing with matches;
- Drugs/Cleaning Products - Since 1992 there have been 42 deaths of children under age 5 from medicines or household chemicals.



OTHER LIVING AREAS

Smoke Detectors:

~ **Maintain regularly**

In 1992 there were 472,000 residential structural fires, with 3,765 residential structural fire deaths. Of the 3,765 deaths, about 30 percent were children under age 15.



Baby Gates:

~ Sound installation and maintenance

An estimated 1,200 injuries to children under age 5 were treated in U.S. hospital emergency rooms in 1994. No deaths. .



Electrical Outlets:

~ Cover, don't leave small children unattended

In 1992 there were about 5,100 outlet or receptacle injuries--almost half of these were children under age 5.

Small Parts:

~ Choking hazards

- Tiny toys, balloons, small objects - from 1980 through 1991 there were about 15 deaths each year to children under age 10 that involved children's products.
- Balloons - about 6 deaths a year
- Small balls - about 3 deaths a year
- Marbles - about 1 death a year
- Other children's items - about 5 deaths a year .

As Summer Ends and Pools Close, CPSC Warns Drowning Dangers Remain All Year Long

To get a free copy of the Water Safety Tips pamphlet, email CPSC at publications@cpsc.gov or call our Hotline at (800) 638-2772.



Consumers can also view a video clip about in-home drowning hazards ([standard version](http://www.cpsc.gov/vnr/asfroot/inhome.aspx) - <http://www.cpsc.gov/vnr/asfroot/inhome.aspx> or a [higher quality version](http://www.cpsc.gov/vnr/asfroot/inhomehq.aspx) - <http://www.cpsc.gov/vnr/asfroot/inhomehq.aspx> - broadband connection recommended).